



Council Bluffs District **CONNECT** April 2007

Iowa Area Resident Bishop

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Connectional Field Minister

✠ ✠ ✠

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Together, Living for Jesus Christ in the World

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Last weekend, I was privileged to be able to attend the “Horizons of Faith” event at First United Methodist Church in Omaha. “Horizons of Faith” is an annual event which brings in a noted speaker for a weekend; this year’s speaker was Dr. Walter Brueggemann, professor emeritus of Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, whose scholarship in and teaching of Old Testament theology has been groundbreaking and inspirational.

The overall theme of the event was “The Journey toward the Common Good”. In his opening remarks, Dr. Brueggemann spoke about the story of Pharaoh and Joseph. Pharaoh has a nightmare about scarcity (famine) and Joseph relieves that nightmare by offering a solution: require all of the surplus food produced to be brought to Pharaoh for storage and distribution. When the lean years arrive, Pharaoh has control of all of the food in the region, and even the nearby nations become dependent upon him. This is how Israel becomes slaves in Egypt. Over time, Pharaoh gains utter control over Israel’s life, until they are entirely occupied in trying to satisfy impossible commands, such as “making bricks without straw”. Pharaoh’s fear of scarcity produces a cycle of events that result in the enslavement of a people, and the irony is that his nightmares do not end—he continues to spend the energies of his empire maintaining the control that he thinks will keep him from losing his life.

Brueggemann’s went on to say that people who operate out of fear and anxiety get caught up in a cycle of power and control which feeds on itself and is never satisfied. This is the story—the narrative—of Pharaoh. When God hears the groans of Israel in slavery, God determines to renew the covenant and invite Israel once again to live a different narrative—a narrative that is based in reliance upon God’s abundance and provision for life. The covenant at Sinai, and all succeeding covenants, were reminders that freedom from fear and the anxious cycle of “getting and maintaining” resides in the freedom that comes from reliance upon the abundance of God. The practice of Sabbath was key to maintaining that freedom, giving everyone a regular opportunity to cease from striving in order to be fed by God. The choice to live the narrative of God’s abundance or the narrative of Pharaoh’s nightmares is ours to make. In other words, if we are anxiety driven, we will never have the energy to work for the common good; on the other hand, if we live and practice God’s abundance, we are free—free to love the neighbor, to forgive wrongs and to practice justice—free to use only what we need and free to cease from striving.

I have been thinking about all of this in the context of Holy Week. I believe that the reason Jesus was able to do his ministry, confront the religious authorities, and face betrayal, trial and death was that he was not afraid for his life. It would be easy to say that he was not afraid because he was the Son of God and knew he was “meeting his destiny”—therefore (of course!) he had no need for fear. To say that, though, would be to say that his grief over his disciples’ lack of understanding, his anger at the

Continued on Page 2.



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corruption of the Temple and his agony in the garden of Gethsemane were all “just for show”—that they were not real. I believe they were real. I believe that he was so convicted of the narrative of God’s abundance that the narrative of Pharaoh could not touch him, and that it was this that carried him through. It was his trust in God that made him free—it is trust in God that has the capacity to set us free.

Interestingly, the week before I went to the “Horizons of Faith” event, *The Alban Weekly* published an article about “The Stewardship of Risk”. In it, author Dan Hotchkiss states that of all the nonprofit organizations he has encountered, the one that is *most averse to risk is the Church.*

Perhaps this Holy Week and Easter it would be helpful for all of us to ponder whether the Church has succumbed to the narrative of Pharaoh—whether we are caught in a cycle of anxiety for our lives that feeds upon and amplifies itself—instead of being grounded in the same conviction of God’s abundance that freed Jesus to do what we now understand as “his saving work”. If we are afraid that we are going to lose whatever we have, we will continue to act out of that fear and wonder why nothing seems to change. Perhaps this Holy Week and Easter we can be renewed in our confidence that Christ indeed has shown us the “way” of salvation, freeing us from our striving, and freeing us to give our lives to the work of the Kingdom in this world.

Karen

Come and Celebrate! **Council Bluffs District Conference**

April 29, 2007
2:30 to 5:30 p.m.
Carson United Methodist Church
Carson, Iowa

Who should attend? Any member of any church is welcome, district clergy, all district officers and committee members, all church lay leaders and all church council chairs.

Why should I attend? We will be conducting the business of the district. We will be recognizing churches who paid 100% of their apportionments and also those who achieved Rainbow Covenant status. We will be celebrating the ministries of the Council Bluffs District for the last time.

Health Habit Renewal

April: green grass, warm breezes, and trees full of leaf buds; all signs of nature's re-growth and renewal. Nature's renewal motivates us to work in our yards, prepare our gardens and flower beds for planting, wash windows or clean out closets. Spiritually we participate in the ultimate renewal, Christ's resurrection.

Usually by this time of year our health habits are in need of renewal, as well. During the winter months, it is easy to lose interest and motivation to be active and to eat healthy. In life's every day struggles, it is often easy to follow the path of least resistance and to continue in unhealthy patterns. It does take an effort to move towards a more healthy balance of stress management, moderate eating, and some form of physical activity every day. And even though we may say “What's the use? I'll never lose this weight, or I don't like exercising, I'll never be able to do this” God's word says differently:

“So, we're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside; where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace.” (2 Cor. 4: 10 The Message

Just as God is working at renewing nature, he is working at renewal in us. As you reflect on about your health habits, ask yourself these questions.

- **Look at what you want to change.** Is it weight loss, becoming more fit, or being less stressed?
- **Then look at what is and what isn't working.** Are you eating the wrong foods, bored with your usual exercise routine, or are too many things competing for your attention.
- **Next, look at what is and isn't possible about your lifestyle.** Do you eat many of your meals out? What is a different physical activity that you enjoy or would like to try? What parts of your day can you control?

Now that you have done an evaluation process, open yourself to the creative process of the spring season and God's Spirit. Be receptive to new possibilities and different ways of accomplishing your goals. Here are some methods to help you improve your health habits.

- Make your health goal a priority. Your health-fullness is important to you, God and your families.
- Practice strategies of staying on track. Plan your meals, learn to say no, listen to your energy levels.
- Invite your family, friends, and colleagues to help you. Most of us need a support network when we work on lifestyle changes.
- When you hit a stumbling point, revise your plan and goals. Don't quit.
- Most of all, stay connected to God, the Source of Life.

May these thought help in renewing your journey towards health-fullness. Blessings,

Kae Tritle, RN
Wellness Coordinator

2007 Rainbow Covenant Book Now Available

The Rainbow Covenant Book is now available at: www.iaumc.org/rainbow Click on "Rainbow Covenant: On the Road to Mission" to access the full Rainbow Covenant Book. Click on "2007 Rainbow Covenant Report Form" to fill out and submit the form. This will launch your e-mail program to send the report to whichever District person is specified. Those persons are listed in the back of the book. You may also print this form off and send it via US Postal Service as in the past.

To download this file, you need Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer. If you don't currently have it, Adobe Acrobat Reader is free of charge and can be downloaded at the following website: <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

Week of the Young Child is April 22-28, 2007

Week of the Young Child (WOYC) is just around the corner! WOYC is a great opportunity to recognize the teachers and programs that teach and care for young children, and to focus public attention on the needs of young children in your community. NAEYC has resources available to help you promote your WOYC events and the theme, "Building Better Futures for All Children." Visit [NAEYC's Web site](http://www.naeyc.org) for a list of suggested activities and other information to plan and publicize your WOYC events.

Some suggestions for partnership activities with congregations and weekday ministries include:

- Reception for teachers of young children - weekday and Sunday and choir, etc.
- Picnic and play time in the church yard or a near-by park on Saturday or Sunday afternoon.
- Sponsor a community gathering to talk about the needs of young children in your neighborhood / area and to develop an action plan to make life better for them and their families.
- Worship service that lifts the needs of young children today and calls the congregation to prayer and advocacy.
- Bulletin Boards themed to young children.
- Special speaker for parents and teachers of young children.
- Hold a book shower to provide new books to the church library for young children.
- Invite local legislator to talk with parents / teachers / church staff about the needs of young children in your legislative area and to listen to the needs as identified by those attending.
- Invite all the young children to a special story telling session by characters (in costume) from the Bible.
- Have a special service of blessing for young children and their families.
- Hold a fair on the church lawn and invite all from the community to attend - focusing on young children.
- AND

Take this opportunity to celebrate together the lives of our youngest children, their parents and their teachers.

PEACE with JUSTICE SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY CONTEST—2007

The Contest

The Peace with Justice Essay contest is open to students who are high school juniors and seniors during the current school year and who live in Iowa or attend an Iowa high school. They need not be members of a United Methodist Church nor any other religious body.

The contest will be announced each year in January through the Iowa Conference Communications office and in an email to all the high school principals and/or guidance counselors in Iowa.

Completed essays must be typewritten (not handwritten) and should be sent to the Iowa Conference Peace with Justice Coordinator, Rev. Dick Clark, 3220 Terrace Drive, Cedar Falls, IA 50613, **postmarked no later than April 15, 2007.**

It is preferred that essays be sent by e-mail by the same date to sttimsrevdick@cfu.net. Essays will be judged by a committee chosen by the Iowa Conference Board of Church & Society of the United Methodist Church. Winners names will be announced and scholarships presented during the Iowa Annual Conference session, June 7-10, 2007, at the Hilton Coliseum in Ames.

Scholarship Essay Contest Winners

There will be three winners. Each one will receive a \$500.00 scholarship award.

The winning essays will be printed in *Grace Upon Grace*, a publication of the Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

This Year's Contest: To enter the essay contest this year, write an essay no longer than 1500 words. This year's topic is "Achieving Peace Through Justice"

Dick Clark, Peace with Justice Coordinator
Iowa Conference Board of Church & Society
% St. Timothy's United Methodist Church
3220 Terrace Drive
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Traveling with The Bishop

August 6-14, 2007, are the dates of the Wesley heritage tour to England. The Bishop and Cynthia Palmer will be fellow travelers to such places as Aldersgate St., and St. Paul's Cathedral in London, Epworth, and Bristol. Other stops include Oxford University, Wm. Shakespeare's home, Coventry Cathedral, and the villages of the Coswolds. Contact Ron and Ruth Anne Petrak at 515-262-3691 or e-mail: ronruthanne507@msn.com.

Council Bluffs District 2007 Apportionments - Percentage Paid

as of February 28, 2007 reports.

Anita—4%	Pilot Grove—8%	Maple Grove—0%	Ross, Calvary—3%
Wiota—18%	Emerson—17%	Marne—17%	Gray—17%
Atlantic, First—1%	Wesley Chapel—0%	Buck Creek—17%	Shelby—8%
Audubon, First—3%	Farragut—11%	Missouri Valley—0%	Persia—17%
Braddyville—18%	Summit—17%	Modale—8%	Shenandoah, First—0%
Shambaugh—0%	Glenwood, Grace—8%	New Market—3%	Sidney—0%
Carson—8%	Griswold—10%	Noble—17%	Thurman—0%
Mt. Hope—17%	Hamburg, First—17%	Grant—3%	Riverton—0%
Carter Lake—18%	Harlan, First—42%	Northboro—15%	Silver City—8%
Clarinda, First 17%	Monroe Chapel—0%	Blanchard—17%	Pacific Jct.—8%
Coin—0%	Irwin—0%	Locust Grove—17%	Hillsdale—8%
Norwich—0%	Kirkman—17%	Oakland—0%	Silver Creek—0%
C. B. Broadway—17%	Defiance—17%	Pisgah—17%	Hancock—17%
C. B. Epworth—2%	Lewis United—6%	Mondamin—8%	Tabor—17%
C. B. Fifth Ave—0%	Logan—8%	Little Sioux—0%	Randolph—25%
C. B. Hazel Dell—0%	Magnolia—17%	Red Oak Circuit:	Villisca—17%
C. B. Salem—8%	Macedonia—17%	Hawthorne—0%	Nodaway—31%
C. B. St. Mark's—8%	Henderson—0%	Stratton—0%	Woodbine—0%
C. B. Trinity—13%	Malvern—0%	Hastings—0%	
Elliott—2%	Strahan—17%	Red Oak, First—0%	

Note: Many churches divide their apportionments into 12 equal payments and send them to the conference treasurer each month. That formula would be: 100% ÷ 12 months = 8.33% per month. Therefore, if a church used this method and were on tract to pay 100% of apportionments by December 31, they would have paid 16-17% of the apportionments by February 28, 2007.

APPLICATION FOR LOCAL FOOD PANTRY GRANT

The Council Bluffs District was granted \$2000.00 from the 2006 Ingathering funds for hunger relief. Local pantries may make application to Randall and Phyllis Baier, for consideration to receive a share of these funds. Please write a brief descriptions of your needs noting the number of families and individuals and the area you serve. If you are fortunate enough to have reserve funds, please do not apply. The application needs to be received by May 1, 2007. Please note the earlier date!

NAME OF LOCAL FOOD PANTRY _____

ADDRESS _____

CONTACT PERSON _____ TELEPHONE _____

Number of Households served _____

Church sponsoring application _____

Area served _____

Signature of Person Making Application _____

Mail to Randall and Phyllis Baier, 71726 600th St., Griswold, IA 51535 before May 1st. —

Don't Forget the Description.

From Behind the Razor Wire -

WHAT WAS IT LIKE FOR YOU, DYSMAS?

By Ed Nesselhuf, the Prairie Pastor/Poet

What was it like for you, Dysmas,
When you heard the knock on the door?
And you heard the jangle of armor and swords
And you knew who the soldiers came for!

Did your throat turn dry as a desert?
Did your hands get clammy with sweat?
When you knew in your heart your luck had run out
It was time to pay up your debt.

What was that like for you, Dysmas?
When they led you away in chains?
You knew that a pardon would not be an option.
Did fear run deep in your veins?

Your days on the run had now ended
When they slammed the door of your cell.
And any hope vanished like mist in the wind
And you knew that you'd just entered hell!

What was that like for you, Dysmas?
When the gavel fell with a thud?
And death was the sentence for all of your crimes
When the judge said, "You'll pay with your blood!"

Did you do some soul searching, Dysmas?
As you counted your remaining days?
Did life get more precious with time running out?
Did you regret not changing your ways?

What was it like for you, Dysmas?
When they stretched you out on a cross?
And hammers drove spikes that tore through your flesh?
Did you think your whole life was a loss?

And what made you defend this Jesus,
Nailed and hanging alongside of you?
When a third one had mocked this supposed Son of God,
You replied, "We just got what we're due."

But it struck you as wrong to see innocence die.
What about him touched your heart?
You asked him to remember you when he rose.
Apparently faith made a fresh start.

Now, what was that like for you, Dysmas?
When Jesus answered he wouldn't forget
And promised you paradise that very day.
He would take on himself all your debt!

Could you believe the promise he gave you?
Or was it just too good to be true?
You had nothing to offer except your own need.
Why would God want a person like you?

Yet the answer is written in Scripture.
The heart of our God is revealed.
A life that's all twisted and broken and bent
Is mended and pardoned and healed.

Do you realize what you've done, Dysmas?
What you've allowed the whole world to see?
That if there's room in the Kingdom for someone like you,
There's got to be room there for me!



Meet Bishop Kefas Kane Mavula
At the West Africa Central Conference held March 1-5, Rev. Kefas K. Mavula was elected bishop of the United Methodist Church of Nigeria. Bishop Mavula served as assistant to Bishop Dabale and presently is Principal of the Junior Secondary

School in Jalingo. Kefas and his family will reside in Jalingo, where the UMC Secretariat is located.

The church has one annual conference with two provisional conferences due to the unprecedented church growth in Nigeria. Most African bishops say they do not fully understand why their churches are growing at such a fast rate, but most believe it of the love of Jesus. Improving lives through evangelism, health care, education, etc. encourages church growth. Please pray for continued blessing on our Nigeria brothers and sisters and their new bishop.

Off to Nigeria

Our individual volunteer, Ron Wilmot of Akron, heads for Nigeria on June 11 followed by a 10 person medical/construction team on June 16. It is my privilege to lead this group which will be my fourth trip to Nigeria. We can use the following things: small hotel soaps, tooth brushes/toothpaste, bandages, band-aids, etc. Marcus Beebe, Elaine Jones and Anne Hartman are from Cedar Rapids, Sue Kromminga from Shell Rock, John Hall of Beaman, James Lierow and I from Des Moines as well as two nurses from Cincinnati and Glennys Ulschak of CT. Let me know if you are able to contribute medical supplies for our trip.

Roof the Chicken House

To keep those hens laying at the Agricultural Center at Zing, an old leaky roof needs to be replaced to the tune of \$1000. A few new tractor parts would rejuvenate the tractor for use in time for spring planting with cost of about \$2,000. Are there any UMMen's groups or Iowa farmers interested in helping their fellow African farmers make these necessary repairs?

Iowa School Teachers Support Nigerian Teachers

As active or retired teachers, elementary, secondary or college level, you know the success in helping educate children and youth. Our example is the Great Teacher, our Lord Jesus Christ, who taught his disciples and followers using a variety of teaching methods. Here's how you may help Nigerian teachers:

Support a Nigerian UMC teacher by providing a \$10 per month stipend

Fund teachers to attend in-service workshops at \$25 per teacher (15 teachers)

Give a subscription to an educational magazine (Scholastic, National Geographic, etc.)

Contribute to the School Library Fund to construct a library on the Junior Secondary School campus (total cost \$20,000 but any amount will be appreciated to make it happen)

Beverly Nolte

Want to save the Council Bluffs District some money?

Want to receive your district newsletter by e-mail **AND** save the Council Bluffs District money in postage, paper and printing at the same time? E-mail:

dianne.richardson@iaumc.org with your name, address, phone number and e-mail address. Thank you!

**All youth invited to...**

N'Pink
Atlantic UMC
Sunday, April 15
3:00 p.m.

N'Pink is a men's "quartet" in pink and their goal and mission is to share the gospel of Jesus with young people. They have performed on numerous occasions in the Des Moines area. A meal will be offered at a nominal cost following the concert. For more information or questions contact Lauri Greenlee at the Atlantic UMC at 712-243-3156.

Speakers from Liberia

On Sunday, June 3 Mary and Herbert Zigbuo, UMC missionaries in Liberia, will be speaking at Broadway UMC, Council Bluffs. If there are other churches in the district interested in having them speak to a group on Saturday June 2nd or Monday-Tuesday (June 4-5) they would be available. Rev. Dana

Scopatz is coordinating their itinerary. Please call her at 712-322-7741.

Pre-conference Materials Meeting

Sunday, June 3, 2007
Carson United Methodist Church
Carson, Iowa
2:30 p.m.

Bring your Pre-Conference materials because there will be a review of the issues and resolutions coming before the Annual Conference. If you are clergy or a lay member to Annual Conference, please plan to attend.

**SCHOOL For MINISTRY 2007**

The Theme for **School for Ministry 2007** is "The Fullness of Christian Worship: Exploring Theology, Practice and Formation. The School for Ministry 2007 web site is now up with complete information about the faculty and facilities.

This year's faculty includes **Don Saliers**, renowned author, lecturer and authority on Christian worship. Joining Dr. Saliers on the faculty are: **Barbara Day Miller**, Assistant Dean of Worship and Music at the Candler School of Theology; **Matthew Berryman**, Associate Pastor at Orange Park United Methodist Church in Jacksonville, Florida, where he has developed and leads worship services designed to provide a way through the divide between so-called "contemporary" and "traditional" camps; and Bishop **Gregory V. Palmer** who will lead a session on "Full Bodied Preaching."

Dates for the School: **April 10, 11 & 12**, at the Des Moines Marriott Downtown. Brochures and registration forms will be mailed in January. In the meantime, please visit the web site at www.schoolforministry.org for complete information.

If you have questions, contact DeLane Wright at dewright@mchsi.com

Macedonia UMW Welcomes Pastor Arnette Pint

The Macedonia UMW welcomes Pastor Arnette Pint to their meeting on May 9th at 9:30 a.m. Pastor Pint serves the new congregation "Women at the Well" church is located at the State of Iowa Women's Prison in Mitchellville. She will share her experiences and stories about starting this new congregation in a very different community setting. Anyone is welcome to come and share this experience. We will be serving a brunch, so please RSVP. You may contact Pastor Marlene Brown at 712-486-2266 or umchurch@netins.net. We hope to see you on May 9th.

Also, if there are any other groups that would like to have Pastor Pint come and speak at a function on May 8, 9, or 10th, please let Pastor Brown know. We will try to make those arrangements with her.



EASTER
APRIL 8, 2007



Do you have a prayer need?
Call the District Prayer Chain at
712-544-2358 to reach
Dorothy Hall,
District Prayer Advocate

PLAN AHEAD FOR 2007

- April 6** - Good Friday. District Office is closed.
- April 8** - Easter Sunday
- April 29** - C. B. District Conference. Carson UMC 2:30 to 5:30 p.m.
- June 3** - C. B. District Pre-Conference Materials Mtg. at Carson UMC. 2:30 p.m.
- June 7-10** - Iowa Annual Conference, Ames, Iowa
- June 29-July 1** - YAC '07, Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa
- July 1** - Council Bluffs District becomes part of the Southwest District
- Sept. 5** - Southwest District UMW annual meeting, First UMC, Harlan
- Oct. 11-14** - Men's Walk to Emmaus, Aldersgate Camp & Retreat Ctr.
- Oct. 18-21** - Women's Walk to Emmaus, Aldersgate Camp & Retreat Ctr.
- Nov. 3** - Ingathering, Greenfield, Iowa

100%Apportionments Paid for 2006

As reported 01/18/2007

Please contact the office of the Conference Treasurer

Wiota	Glenwood, Grace	Blanchard
Atlantic, First	Griswold	Locust Grove
Audubon, First	Harlan, First	Mondamin
Braddyville	Monroe Chapel	Hawthorne
Carson	Kirkman	Stratton
Mt. Hope	Defiance	Shelby
Carter Lake	Logan	Persia
Clarinda, First	Magnolia	Thurman
Coin	Macedonia	Silver City
C. B. Broadway	Henderson	Pacific Jct.
C. B. Hazel Dell	Strahan	Silver Creek
C. B. Salem	Maple Grove	Hancock
C. B. Trinity	Marne	Tabor
Pilot Grove	Buck Creek	Randolph
Emerson	Missouri Valley	Tennant
Wesley Chapel	Modale	Villisca
Summit	Noble	Woodbine

Ministry Inquiry Retreats

Retreats are held six Saturdays during the year at various sites in the Conference. The retreat schedule is as follows:

July 1, 2007

Ames Collegiate/Wesley Foundation

September 8, 2007

To be announced

For more information or to register go to:

David Glenn-Burns, Wesley Foundation

2242 College St.,

Cedar Falls, IA 50613-3655

E-mail: Wesley@cfu.net Phone: 319-266-4071



Prayer Calendar

April

- 01-Red Oak, First
- 08-C. B. Trinity
- 15-Ross-Gray
- 22-Shelby-Persia
- 29-Shenadoah

May

- 06-Sidney-Thurman-Riverton
- 13-Silver City-Pacific Jct-Hillsdale
- 20-Silver Creek-Hancock
- 27-Tabor-Randolph



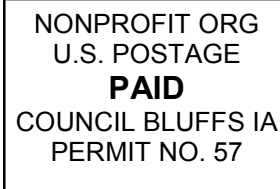
Birthday and Anniversaries

- 05-Dana & Bob Scopatz**
- 07-Doug Dungan**
- 08-David Kruse**
- 13-Laurie Buckhahn**
- 17-Robert & Joleen Dagit**
- 22-Sandra Beard**
- 26-Marlene Brown**
- 29-Susan McPherson**

With Sympathy:

Our sympathy to Thelma and Bud Wiser in the death of her sister, Wilma Knock, of Melvin, Iowa.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
COUNCIL BLUFFS DISTRICT
35 MAIN PL STE 100
COUNCIL BLUFFS IA 51503-0702



Return Service Requested

Carter Lake United Methodist Church

As I write this article, Lent is rapidly moving along. This next Sunday at the Carter Lake UMC we will be celebrating Palm/Passion Sunday. Our children, as always, will play a very integral part in worship. During the opening hymn, they will parade in, waving palms and shouting, "Hosanna!" What a joy it is to have them so excited about worship and being a part of it.

This past week, we had a special children's gathering at the church to begin to build the enthusiasm for our upcoming Vacation Bible School. Over 20 were present, a number of whom were new to activities in our church. Food, fun, and a special magic show put on by one of our soon-to-be new members began to stoke the fires of excitement about "Lift Off!", the Cokesbury VBS program for this year.

As Easter rapidly approaches, we look forward to this most special day of the Christian year. Children, once again, will play a significant role in worship as they sing a hymn during the Communion at Easter Worship. Last Sunday, following worship, it was wonderful to hear them intoning the words, "Let us break bread together on our knees."

We look forward, once again, to receiving new members on the second Sunday of May. The words of one of the people really warmed my heart recently. She said that here, at Carter Lake UMC she has experienced a true community of grace in which her relationship with God has grown. That is the hope of any of our who gather as a community of faith each week.

Once again, thank you for your ongoing support, your prayers, and your encouragement. We are so delighted to be in our shared ministry at this time and in this place. May you have a blessed Easter and may the power of the Risen Savior be the strength in your witness and in ours.

Grace and peace,

Mark Heath, Pastor